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**Environment Department to Hold Meeting to Update Public on Ozone
Progress in San Juan County**

(Santa Fe, NM) – In order to update the public on progress achieved under the Early Action Compact for ozone in San Juan County, the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) will host a Public Meeting on **Wednesday, March 17 from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm at the Farmington Civic Center, located at 200 West Arrington in Farmington.**

The Early Action Compact is an agreement that allows governments in San Juan County, The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and NMED's Air Quality Bureau to work collaboratively to address elevated concentrations of ozone measured in San Juan County. Ozone is a harmful air pollutant that has been shown to lead to asthma, especially in children. The goal of the compact is to determine what measures, if any, would have significant effects in maintaining and/or lowering the ozone concentrations measured in San Juan County.

Since 2002, after several consecutive years of monitoring ozone concentrations in San Juan County that approach the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS), NMED has held public meetings in San Juan County to inform citizens about ozone air pollution and discuss the health and economic impacts of exceeding the ozone standard. The ozone NAAQS is a federal health-based standard set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Most recently NMED has worked with contractors to complete photochemical air quality modeling and analysis to identify causes and potential strategies to ensure ozone in San Juan County does not exceed the federal standards. The agenda for the March 17 meeting will include discussion of the latest results of air quality modeling and development of a Clean Air Action Plan for San Juan County. Wednesday's public meeting will also be an opportunity for community members to offer input on this plan.

San Juan County, the Cities of Aztec, Bloomfield, and Farmington, NMED and the EPA signed the Early Action Compact in December 2002.

For more information, please contact Mary Uhl, Manager of the Air Quality Bureau's Planning and Policy Section, at (505) 955-8086 or Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Director at (505) 827-0314.

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